

3. (Amended) The lock washer of claim [1] ¹~~4~~, wherein adjacent ones of said tube engagement flanges define a compression slot therebetween.

¹~~4~~. (Amended) A [The] lock washer for use in a catheter connector, [of claim 1, further] comprising:

a ring defining a periphery of the lock washer; and
a plurality of tube engagement flanges associated with and extending centrally from said ring, each of said tube engagement flanges having a central tip, central tips of at least selected ones of said plurality of tube engagement flanges defining a tube receptacle for receiving and retaining a tube within said lock washer; and

a collapsible[,] web disposed between adjacent ones of said tube engagement flanges.

¹~~4~~ ¹~~5~~. (Amended) The lock washer of claim [1] ¹~~4~~, wherein said tube engagement flanges are flexible towards the center of a plane [defined by] in which the periphery of said ring is located.

¹~~5~~. (Amended) The lock washer of claim ¹~~5~~, wherein [upon flexion of] said tube engagement flanges are configured to flex toward [towards] the center of said ring[,] to decrease the diameter of said tube receptacle[decreases].

¹~~6~~ ¹~~7~~. (Amended) The lock washer of claim ¹~~7~~, wherein, following the release of a compressive load from said lock washer periphery, said tube engagement flanges are configured to resiliently flex back to a relaxed state.

¹~~8~~ ¹~~9~~ ¹~~10~~. (Amended) The lock washer of claim [9] ¹~~4~~, wherein, upon flexion of said adjacent ones of said tube engagement flanges toward said ring, said web [collapses] is configured to collapse upon itself.

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11. (Amended) The lock washer of claim 4, wherein, following flexion of said tube engagement flanges, said tube engagement flanges return to a relaxed state and said web [re-expands] is configured to re-expand to an original state.

12. (Amended) The lock washer of claim [1] ~~4~~, wherein each said central tip comprises a concave arc.

12 13 14. (Amended) The lock washer of claim [13] ~~15~~, wherein adjacent ones of said tube engagement flanges define a compression slot therebetween.

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15. (Amended) A [The] lock washer[of claim 13], [further] comprising:
a ring defining a periphery of the lock washer;
a plurality of resilient tube engagement flanges associated with said ring and extending therefrom, each of said tube engagement flanges having a relaxed state and an engaged state, and each including a central tip, said central tips of selected ones of said plurality of tube engagement flanges defining a tube receptacle through the lock washer for receiving a tube; and
a web extending between and adjoining adjacent ones of said tube engagement flanges.

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16. (Amended) The lock washer of claim [13] ~~15~~, wherein each of said tube engagement flanges [are] is proximally compressible with respect to said ring.

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17. (Amended) The lock washer of claim [17] ~~15~~, wherein[, upon applying a compressive load to said tube engagement flanges,] said tube engagement flanges are configured to flex into said engaged state under a compressive load.

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18. (Amended) The lock washer of claim [17] ~~15~~, wherein[, upon compression of] said tube engagement flanges are configured to compress toward the center of said ring to decrease[,] the inner diameter of said tube receptacle [decreases].